ER Site No. 160: Bldg 9832 Septic System

ADS: 1295
Operable Unit: Septic Tanks and Drainfields

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Site History

ER Site 160 includes the seepage pit serving the high explosives (HE) wastewater system for Bldg. 9832. There is no septic system associated with this site. Building 9832, the Vehicle Assembly Building, is located on the northwest corner of the intersection of the Burn Site road and the new Cable Site road in Lurance Canyon. The building was constructed in 1968 for the preparation of explosive tests, involving explosive train assembly, propellant assemblies, parts degreasing, and painting of test assemblies. Wastewater from the assembly area cleanup, some of which may have contained nitroguanidine, ammonium nitrate, Composition C4, PBX-9404, PBX-9205, and PETN, was discharged through a floor trough to a catch box and a seepage pit. A hand-washing sink, located inside the high bay on the east wall, empties into the trough just before it exits the building. The building has no toilet facilities or permanent water supply; water for washing was provided by a tanker truck to a holding tank located on the north side of the building.

During past operations, the floor in the HE assembly area was washed with water into the floor trough that discharged via a concrete channel covered with a steel lid to a catch box and seepage pit. The concrete channel exits the southeast end of the building, turns southwest, and drains into the catch box, which contained a polyethylene filter bag for collecting heavy particles of waste HE. The filter bags were periodically replaced and turned over to the U.S. Air Force (USAF) explosive ordnance disposal team for disposal. The floors are no longer washed down with water; they were swept and wet-mopped since the late 1980s. The liquid overflow from the catch box entered a 1.5-m (5-ft) diameter by 2.4-m (8-ft) deep seepage pit located on the southwest side of the fence. Estimated effluent volume has not been quantified. The seepage pit is no longer in use. Bldg. 9832 is no longer continuously occupied.

The site is estimated to be approximately 15 to 46 meters (50 to 150 feet) above the regional water table. However, depth-to-groundwater information is lacking for the area in which this site is located.

Constituents of Concern

Constituents of concern are primarily explosive compounds (nitroguanidine, ammonium nitrate, Composition C4, PBX-9404, PBX-9205, and PETN).

Current Hazards

No known surface or subsurface hazards have been identified, based on environmental soil and soil-gas sampling that has been conducted at the site.

Current Status of Work

A passive soil gas survey was conducted at the site 1994. No significant Volatile Organic Compound (VOC) or Semi-Volatile Organic Compound (SVOC) anomalies were detected.

Soil sampling around the seepage pit was performed in 1994.

A confirmatory sampling No Further Action (NFA) proposal was submitted to the New Mexico Environment Department/ Hazardous Radioactive Materials Bureau (NMED/HRMB) in July 1996.

In response to requests by and negotiations with the NMED/HRMB and DOE OB, resampling of soil from directly beneath the seepage pit at this site was completed in January 1998. Soil samples had been previously collected from a pair of borings located on either side of the seepage pit, but this method was considered inadequate by the NMED. Analytical results for the additional soil samples collected from directly beneath the seepage pit were not significantly different from the analytical results for soil samples collected on either side of the seepage pit. NMED regulators agreed with this conclusion, and determined that additional soil sampling beneath the seepage pit would not be required.

NMED issued a Request for Supplemental Information (RSI) in June 1998, and SNL/NM responded to this RSI in November 1998. NMED issued a second RSI in June 2000, and indicated that the site was acceptable for NFA. The NFA was approved by NMED on November 19, 2001, after completing the public review and permit modification process.

Future Work Planned

No future work is planned.

Waste Volume Estimated/Generated

No waste was generated at this site.

Information for ER Site 160 was last updated Mar 12, 2002.